Development is under way

Just five months ago Phil Harding broke the ground and the replica Roman spade in the process, to mark the start of the construction of the Collections Discovery Centre.

Ground Breaking - Phil Harding

Almost 12 years since the original concept for the project began it was hard to believe it was really going to happen. Well, there is certainly no doubt now as the building grows every day.

By the end of the year the building will be complete and work will begin on fitting out the conservation laboratory, Joseph Brooks Research Room, main and sensitive archaeological stores and the new education workshop. Fishbourne Roman Palace and Chichester District Museum have appointed a Curator, Rob Symmons to work with the archaeological collections, we look forward to introducing you to him in the May 2006 Newsletter.

Meanwhile over in the north wing cover building the renovation is underway to protect the Palace remains and mosaics. To enable us to stay open to the public throughout the project this work has been divided into three phases, with one third of the building closed off to the public at any one time.

The first third will be completed and reopened to the public later this month, while behind the giant screen stretching across the width of the building the work will continue to:

- Repair the structural framework of the building and roof
- Install double glazing to reduce damaging sunlight
- Redecorate the walls to reflect more closely the original décor
- Improve the lighting so the mosaics can be seen more clearly
- Upgrade and extend the walkways to improve access
- Install a new interactive area for hands on activities
- Upgrade the information panels to improve interpretation

Collections Discovery Centre

Welcome signs around the Palace, inform visitor of what is happening and we have installed a port-a-cabin "Exhibition and Activity Centre". In here visitors can find a pictorial display of the mosaics and areas of the Palace not currently accessible and participate in a series of changing interactive activities manned by our invaluable volunteers.

As we learn to live and work together, builders and archaeologists, electricians and educators, carpenters and guides, we are all driven by the same motive: to ensure all our visitors during the development have the best possible time, tell all their friends and come back to see us when the work is all finished. So if you haven't yet been during the development, please come and see us soon..

FRIENDS OF
Fishbourne
ROMAN PALACE

Issue 2: October 2005

Invitation

You are invited to join us on

Thursday 8th December 2005
From 5pm – 7pm

for an

Exclusive Friends Christmas Evening

to

Celebrate the completion of the first phase of the Development and welcome the Festival of Saturnalia (see page 3).

Enjoy a preview tour of the new Collections Discovery Centre,

Take a peek behind the screen at the renovations of the main building

Enjoy mince pies and mulled wine in the newly renovated North Wing Palace Courtyard

Plus take the opportunity to complete your Christmas shopping from our exciting range of books and gifts.

RSVP by 1st December - see reverse.

SUSSEX PAST
The Sussex Archaeological Society

2005 The Year of the Volunteer - come and join us

Fishbourne Roman Palace, like so many other heritage sites, depends on a loyal group of dedicated volunteers. And, at Fishbourne this applies now, during the development, even more than at any time in the past.

Volunteering gives you, our Friends, the opportunity to become even more closely involved with the Palace and its treasures. One Friend, Neville Haskins tells us how he became a volunteer. Neville and his wife joined as Friends and came on one of the first Behind the Scenes tours, featured in the spring newsletter. During the visit Neville saw just how much work needed to be done before the new Collections Discovery Centre is finished. He decided to volunteer to help and was offered several opportunities. He decided to help with the project to re-label all the Finds boxes – some of which had not been opened for around 40 years, since they were originally packed following excavation!

Painted wall plaster

The objective is to bring them all up to a uniform standard with new laminated labels, making them easier to identify when it comes to moving them to their new home.

As Neville said, "It is certainly not as boring as it sounds, because as part of the process we open each and every box. So not only do we get to see what is inside, sometimes we come across interesting discoveries. For example in one box we found some coins and in another, part of a metal brooch. They had been misfiled and are now safely where they should be."

Neville is a retired research chemist, with no formal background in archaeology, just a lifelong interest which he is now able to develop, thanks to being a volunteer. He said, "I volunteer one day a week, if possible. It is an extremely pleasant place to work and everyone is very friendly. I thoroughly recommend it to anyone who has a little time to spare.

Having learned so much about the Finds, I am now tempted to become a volunteer guide for the new Collections Discovery Centre when it opens in the spring"

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer there are a wide range of opportunities available now.

Finds boxes before...

...and after!

Please contact Suzanne Evans on 01243 785859 to learn more and arrange a visit to discuss how you could become involved.

Friends of Fishbourne Roman Palace – Happy First Birthday to us!

It hardly seems possible but it was last October that we launched the Friends of Fishbourne Roman Palace. Thank you to all of you for your support during the last year. Your subscriptions and donations total some £4,000 and with your help we raised almost £1,000 in the Fontwell Park Raceday Prize Draw. One lucky Friend, Joyce Davis won the prize of a beautiful pewter and silver necklace donated by Bramble Designs. David Rudkin presented Joyce with her prize during the Behind the Scenes visit she attended. On the same occasion we asked Joyce and fellow Friends Diana Symes, Angela and Alby Patterson to peel off another section from the mosaic totaliser. Joyce said, "I've enjoyed the Behind the Scenes visit very much indeed and the necklace is just the sort of thing I like"

Lindsey Davis, best selling author of the Falco series of mysteries who is an Emperor friend, helped launch the Million pound Mosaic Appeal in September 2003.

Friends and Totaliser

We now have almost 100 Friends: individuals, families, young Friends and some famous Friends too including Tony Robinson from Channel 4's Time Team and Lindsey Davis, the author of the Falco series of mysteries set in the Roman Empire.

As we reach our first anniversary Friends who joined us last October will soon be receiving their membership renewals. We are maintaining the membership fees at the same level, at least until the completion of our development. Your continued support is much appreciated. We look forward to welcoming you to Fishbourne again soon. And if you haven't been able to attend your complimentary "Behind the Scenes" visit yet we have scheduled a further series of dates - see back page for details.

Contact us on 01243 785859 or email projectfish@sussexpast.co.uk to book

Roman Army Week

From Monday 24th - Friday 28th October Fishbourne Roman Palace once again hosts Roman Army Week. The opportunity to spend a day at the Palace and learn all about life in the Roman Army.

There will be a whole range of activities to take part in including trying on armour, tasting Roman food, sword training, spear throwing, archery and lots more. Participate in Roman drill practice and learn to write your name in Latin so you can sign for your pay at the end of your day as a Roman soldier.

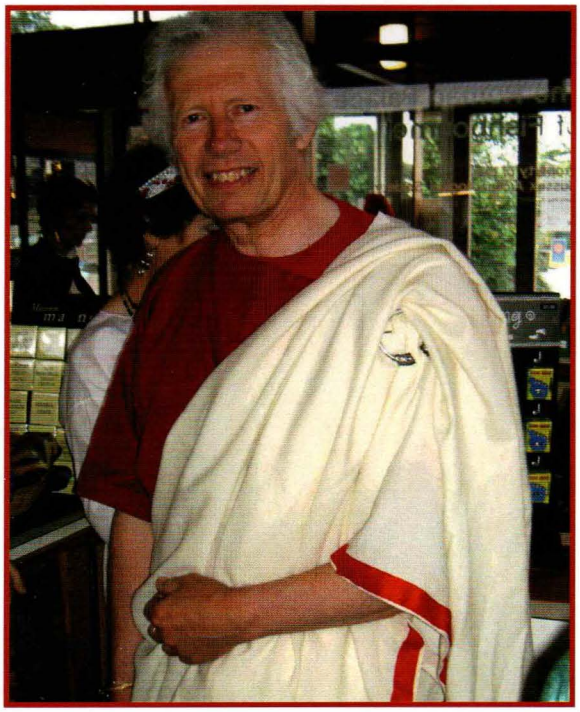
Entry is free for Friends during Roman Army week, so bring along any budding Roman soldiers you know to join in. It is lots of fun for girls and boys of all ages.

(Outside events are weather dependent, alternatives will be available)

A budding Roman General!

Saturnalia

Saturnalia is a Roman festival celebrated between 17th and 23rd December. A time of goodwill to all men and an opportunity to give and receive presents - a public holiday, with a feast open to everybody to honour Saturn the god of seed sowing. A very special time when slaves were let off their duties for a day and many were served by their masters, criminals escaped punishment and normal business ceased. Each household chose a mock king to preside over the festivities and act as "Lord of Misrule" who permitted people to behave in outrageous ways for fun.



David Rudkin, Director of Fishbourne Roman Palace in typical roman costume

Holding a Saturnalia party would be a great way to welcome the festive season and help raise funds for Fishbourne Roman Palace's development. At work, at home or at school there are a whole host of ways to join in the fun. Ideas include:

- A fancy dress day or party, charge your guests £1 to wear Roman dress or fine them £1 if they don't - with a prize for the best costume of course.
- Elect a "Lord of Misrule" charging everyone £1 for the privilege of voting and then do as the "Lord of Misrule" bids for the day.
- Sponsor the boss or teacher to be a slave for the day.
- To make Saturnalia really special why not host a Roman Dinner party? A whole host of authentic recipe ideas can be found at www.sussexpast.co.uk/fishbourne click on Taste of Rome Recipies.

Please let us know your ideas and how you celebrate Saturnalia. We will feature your stories and photos in the next Newsletter. Please send them to: Tracey Richardson at Fishbourne Roman Palace, or email projectfish@sussexpast.co.uk

Cheques for donations should be made payable to Friends of Fishbourne Roman Palace and sent for the attention of Tracey Richardson. Please mark the envelope Saturnalia.

Members of The Association of Roman Archaeologists all dressed up

Dates for the diary

Saturday 15th October	11am-1pm Exclusive Friends "Behind the Scenes"
24th – 28th October	Roman Army Week (see page 3). Great interactive fun for all the family.
Monday 14th November	11am – 1pm – Exclusive Friends " Behind the Scenes"
Thursday 8th December,	**5 - 7pm - Friends Exclusive Christmas Evening.** Tour the New Collections Discovery Centre, see the renovations of the building protecting the mosaics in progress, enjoy mulled wine and mince pies in the newly renovated North Wing Palace Courtyard, plus a chance to complete your Christmas shopping. Free for Friends, Guests are welcome at £5 per head. RSVP by 1st December to Tracey Richardson - 01243 785859 or projectfish@sussexpast.co.uk
Thursday 2nd February 06	11am – 1pm – Exclusive Friends " Behind the Scenes"
Tuesday 7th March 06	11am – 1pm – Exclusive Friends "Behind the Scenes"

Unique gift ideas from Fishbourne Roman Palace

Buy A Brick Campaign

Bricks make a great Christmas present or a unique gift for any occasion. For a minimum donation of just £5.00 a brick will be allocated in the name of your choice, you can buy one brick, several bricks or a whole wall! A special 'Buy a Brick' Certificate will be sent to your nominated recipient recognising your donation and support for our appeal.

Simply fill in and return the enclosed form (photocopy additional forms if required), order online at www.sussexpastshop.co.uk or call 01243 785859.

Fishbourne Roman Palace Opening Times:

October: Daily 10am –5pm

November 1st - 15th December and 17th- 18th December: Daily 10am - 4pm

January: Saturday and Sunday only 10am - 4pm

February: Daily 10am - 4pm

March 1st - July 31st, and September: Daily 10am - 5pm

August: Daily 10am - 6pm

Fishbourne Roman Palace, Salthill Road, Fishbourne, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 3QR

Tel: 01243 785859
Email: projectfish@sussexpast.co.uk
Website: www.sussexpast.co.uk/fishbourne

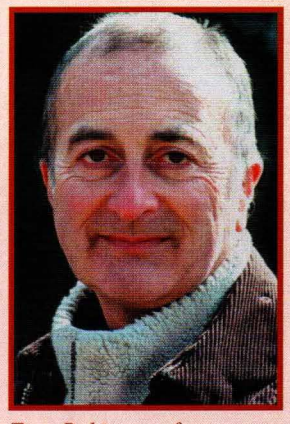
Friends of Fishbourne Roman Palace

Friendship of Fishbourne Roman Palace makes a very special gift, which lasts a whole year.

From £8 for Young membership to £30 for a Family all theses benefits can be enjoyed during 2006 and following on from your generosity, we hope your friends will remain our Friends too.

If you are buying Friendship as a gift please fill in the enclosed application form, with the details of the person to receive the gift and provide your details on a separate note.

A Friends welcome pack will be sent to arrive in time for Christmas, with instructions to be opened on Christmas Day and a letter explaining who the gift is from.



Tony Robinson of Channel 4's Time Team is a Centurian Friend, he says "it is vital that we all do everything we can to help".

- Free entry to the Palace, Museum and Roman Garden during normal opening hours, including during Roman Army Week and Family Fun Days
- 50% discount on admission to Sussex Archaeological Society's five other properties: Lewes Castle and Barbican House Museum, Anne of Cleves House (Lewes), Michelham Priory (Nr. Hailsham), The Priest House (West Hoathly) and Marlipins Museum (Shoreham-by-Sea). Visit www.sussexpast for details and opening times
- A Welcome Pack including guidebook and invitation to an exclusive "Behind the Scenes" visit
- A Friends Newsletter twice a year
- Invitations to Exclusive Friends events
- Priority booking and 10% discount on ticketed events at the Palace

Additional application forms available at the Palace, online at www.sussexpast.co.uk/fishbourne click on Friends of Fishbourne Roman Palace or by calling 01243 785859

The Friends of Fishbourne Roman Palace is a subsidiary of The Sussex Archaeological Society.
Registered Charity Number 207037 Registered Company Limited by guarantee Number 202795